

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what are the Government's remedial plans?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) Out of the total loans of Rs. 2315.51 crores disbursed by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) upto March 2000, the recoverable fund is Rs. 1098.40 crores. The working fund of Rs. 710.46 crores given to Khadi institutions is not recoverable so long they maintain their level of production.

(b) The closing stock has increased from Rs. 30.96 crores as on 31st March, 1995 to Rs. 44.22 crores as on 31st March, 2000.

(c) The closing stock has increased mainly due to decline in sales of trading units.

(d) Government has asked KVIC to maintain better inventory management. All the trading units have been cautioned by the KVIC to exercise control over purchases and they have been asked to classify their stock item-wise and to segregate the old, damaged, slow moving stock at the time of stock taking and to make efforts for their quick disposal and the Standing Review Committee on Marketing under the Chairmanship of Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Marketing) have been constituted by the KVIC to review the performance of all trading units including their stock position.

Mover, the Government of India announced a package for the Khadi and Village Industries sector on 14.05.2001, for the development and promotion of Khadi and Village Industries. The main features of this package consist of a Rebate Policy for five years, option of Rebate and market Development Assistance (MDA), Insurance cover to Khadi artisans, emphasis on improvement of Khadi products, creation of packaging and design facilities, measures to promote marketing, brand building, cluster development etc.

Licences to private companies

1205. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of private companies have been given licences to launch wireline services to differentiate from the present cellular service;

(b) if so, the names of the companies who have launched or likely to launch the service in the country; and

(c) what benefit would the consumers get from this service as compared to other services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir. Twenty five licences have been issued to three private companies for operation of basic telephone service in different service areas with help of wireline and wireless access technology since July 2001. These are apart from six licences issued in 1997-98 for the same.

(b) Names of the companies who have launched or likely to launch the service in the country are enclosed as Statement (See below)

(c) Apart from providing competition, the subscriber will have the benefit of using handheld terminals in wireless access systems within the local areas i.e. Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs), typically Tehsils. This facility shall be available to the subscribers of Basic Telephone Service with free incoming calls and outgoing calls at the prescribed local call tariffs of Rs. 1.20 for three minutes without any air time charges.

Statement

Names of the private companies who have launched or likely to launch the service

Sl. No.	Name of the Company	Service Area
1.	M/s. Bharti Telepet Ltd.	Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Delhi, Tamil Nadu
2.	M/s. HFCL Infotel Ltd.	Punjab
3.	M/s. Reliance Telecom Private Ltd.	Gujarat
4.	M/s. Reliance Communications Ltd.	Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, West Bengal including Sikkim and Kolkata, UP (East), U.P. (West) including Uttaranchal, Karnataka, Maharashtra including Mumbai and Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala,

Sl. Name of the Company No.	Service Area
	Orissa, Bihar including Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh including Chhatisgarh, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Andaman & Nicobar, Tamil Nadu
5. M/s. Tata Teleservices Ltd.	Andhra Pradesh Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu including Chennai
6. M/s. Shyam Telelink Ltd.	Rajasthan
7. M/s. Hughes Telecom India Ltd.	Maharashtra including Mumbai & Goa.

Telecom services in rural areas

1206. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken so far to improve telecom service in the rural areas of Bellary Lok Shabh constituency in Karnantaka;

(b) whether there is any proposal to introduce mobile phone service to Bellary; and

(c) if so, by when, it would be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, as on 31st October, 2001, 111 telephone exchanges with 74936 equipped capacity and 56449 direct exchange lines are working in Bellary Lok Sabha Constituency in Karnataka. Out of 111 exchanges 96 exchanges have reliable transmission media.

STD facility is provided to District Headquarater, all Sub-division, Taluk Headquarter and Block Headquarters. Village Public Telephones are provided to all 591 listed villages.

Two new exchanges have been opened at (i) H. Veerapura and (ii) Garaganagalapura and 2583 new connections have been provided so far in this year.